

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David E. Price
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, and
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, and
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David P. Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Chairman Price, Chair Pingree, Ranking Member Cole, Ranking Member Diaz-Balart, and Ranking Member Joyce:

The U.S. public school system was developed to make the opportunity to achieve an education accessible to all. However, public school teachers too often face limited resources and declining facility conditions. This has become all the more apparent throughout the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, which has further exposed the inequities within our education system and underscored the importance of updating and retrofitting public school facilities. Therefore, as you work to prioritize FY2022 appropriations in your respective subcommittees, we write to request robust funding for programs related to public school infrastructure investment.

Public school facilities make up the second largest sector of the nation's infrastructure spending and often serve a secondary function as emergency community facilities, as we have seen throughout the pandemic and during recent extreme weather events. Despite the communal value of these facilities, both the U.S. General Accountability Office (GAO) and the National Center for Education Statistics report that over 50 percent of public school districts require sizable

investments, repairs, and modifications in order to bring the infrastructure of facilities in to good condition.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers 2021 Infrastructure Report Card, K-12 facility infrastructure within the U.S. received a “D” rating. This is alarming as the previous installment of this report, the 2017 Infrastructure Report Card, also reported that U.S. K-12 facilities received a “D” rating. In addition, over one-third of public schools utilize portable buildings to address overcrowding, and many of these structures are also in unsuitable condition.

In the direst cases, public school facilities specifically suffer from extensive mold and mildew, contaminated drinking water, faulty heating and cooling systems, unhealthy indoor air-quality, and other substandard conditions. These conditions are particularly troubling as students from low-income and minority communities are more likely to attend school in these buildings.

The U.S. public school system and the infrastructure that supports it are fundamental to our nation’s pursuit of equal opportunity for all. Further, ensuring safe and healthy learning environments for students are essential components of any plan to resume in-person learning amid the ongoing public health pandemic. Therefore, we urge you to provide robust funding for infrastructure projects to repair and modernize public school buildings for our students in order to ensure our nation’s school facilities are once again both suitable and sound.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bobby L. Rush", is positioned above the printed name.

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

/s/
Bill Foster
Member of Congress

/s/
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

/s/
Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

/s/
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress

/s/
Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress

/s/
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

/s/
Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

/s/
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

/s/
Jesús G. “Chuy” García
Member of Congress

/s/
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

/s/
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

/s/
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

/s/
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

/s/
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

/s/
Peter Welch
Member of Congress

/s/

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

/s/

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

/s/

David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress

/s/

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

/s/

Tom Suozzi
Member of Congress

/s/

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

/s/

Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress

/s/

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

/s/

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

/s/

André Carson
Member of Congress

/s/

Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress

/s/

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

/s/

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

/s/

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

/s/

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

/s/
William R. Keating
Member of Congress

/s/
Mike Levin
Member of Congress

/s/
Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress

/s/
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

/s/
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

/s/
Joe Neguse
Member of Congress

/s/
Adam Smith
Member of Congress

/s/
Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/
Al Lawson
Member of Congress

/s/
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/
A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

/s/
Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

/s/
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

/s/
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

/s/
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

/s/
Sean Casten
Member of Congress

/s/
Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress

/s/
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

/s/
Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress

/s/
John B. Larson
Member of Congress

/s/
G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

/s/
Jason Crow
Member of Congress

/s/
Marie Newman
Member of Congress

/s/
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress